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Girls In Tech: Articles

August 1, 2013

Nadia Marcinko is a model-turned-pilot and the inspiring new feature of our **Girls in Tech**. After a successful career in modeling with top brands like Chanel, Dior, and Vogue, Marcinko decided to tackle her fear of flying head on. She is now an FAA certified flight instructor as well as a Gulfstream II, III, and IV pilot in command. New York City FIRST had the lucky opportunity to interview her. You can also follow this Gulfstream Girl on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GulfstreamGirl>. Here is what she had to say:



What made you realize that you wanted to be a pilot? When did you make the change?

I started working as a fashion model when I was sixteen years old, so traveling has always been a part of my job. There was only one problem – I was a nervous flyer. After a particularly unpleasant flight, I decided to learn about all those strange noises and maneuvers and I took a flying lesson. I had no intentions of becoming a pilot at the time, but I became fascinated by flying and the sense of freedom that comes with being at the controls. I was 23 when I realized I wanted to work in aviation and got my pilot license. It was quite an adjustment coming from a modeling background, but at least I still work on runways – they are just a little longer now.

Did you find it hard to make your way into the male-dominated pilot world as opposed to the female-dominated modeling world?

It takes a bit of confidence. In hindsight, it was the best decision I ever made, but it was not without a few obstacles along the way.

Only 6% of all pilots are women. Although most men I met throughout my training were very supportive, it can be a little intimidating trying to make your way into such a male-dominated field. On the other hand, I think the sense of being the odd one out actually worked in my advantage – it made me study a bit more, work a little harder and appreciate each accomplishment more than I did in my previous career.

Occasionally, a new passenger or a flying student I meet for the first time, greets me with that worried look. But it tends to go away as soon as we start talking and they realize, 'Ok, she's knows what she's talking about.' I think when you are entering any field as a minority, success is a matter of knowing your stuff and being heard. Having to communicate that and alter people's first impressions was probably the biggest adjustment coming from the world of fashion & beauty, where success was mostly built on those perceptions.

What is your favorite technology that you use as a pilot?

That's a tough question because it varies from one airplane to another, but one device that's always in my flight bag is the iPad. While that's not exactly an aviation-specific gadget, it completely changed the way we fly in the last few years.

There is an app for almost everything I need to do before, during and after a flight. I can calculate the weight and balance of the aircraft, file a flight plan, check the weather, navigate or access checklists and manuals to quickly troubleshoot any problems. And in case an engine quits, there is even an application that works with GPS and the built in gyros and accelerometers to help point out the best glide path to a safe landing in any weather. It is not

perfect and I wouldn't rely solely on the iPad to do any of those things, but it certainly adds another layer of safety on a flight.

What inspired you to create Gulfstream Girl?

I understand that my transition from modeling to flying is a bit unusual. Because of the way I stumbled upon aviation, I thought there must be many more unlikely pilot candidates, who just don't realize it is an option.

I think it's important to lead by example, so when I hear people talk about an upcoming pilot shortage or the lack of young people interested in STEM, I feel compelled to do something. I decided to start an aviation page to share my excitement about it and create a community of like-minded people. My goal was for people to hear my story and say to themselves: 'This looks like a lot of fun and if that girl could do it, so can I.'

What would you say to girls who want to get into a tech-driven field?

I believe a career in a tech field is the best-kept secret for girls. Aside from the increased job security, there is also a unique sense of accomplishment that comes with succeeding in a male-dominated field.

As a flight instructor, I've noticed that my female students tend to be very capable but much more timid and unsure of themselves in the air, than my male students. It is not a reflection of their skills, but rather a self-imposed limitation. So if I could share one piece of advice to young girls, it would be to maintain confidence in your abilities.

I think it is important for young people in general to understand that you don't have to fit into a certain box to work in tech-driven field. I used to be a model (you can't get much further away from technology), and yet I ended up flying business jets for a living. I am still very much a girly girl, I like nice clothes and pink nail polish. Luckily, that's not a disqualifying condition if you also want to fly jets...or build robots.

Many thanks to Nadia Marcinko for her time and support of New York City FIRST.

July 19, 2013

Huffington Post partnered with Cisco for a project that focuses on the importance of STEM research and the women behind the innovation. The project features 11 women across the world who are working in STEM technologies. Readers are also able to share their own stories about being a women in a male-dominated field or the story of someone they know. See the article below:

[STEM Stories: The Faces Of Women In Technology_\(SHARE YOURS\)](#)

June 26th, 2013

Though there are less women in the top circles of technology and engineering companies, they are catching up. More and more women are rising to the top of their fields. Take a look at these inspiring articles on women in technology:

- [10 Inspiring Quotes from Women Tech Leaders](#)
- [Women In Tech Face Many Challenges — But There is Hope](#)
- [Women Who Run Tech Startups Are Catching Up](#)

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